

For Immediate Release

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Ivan L. Belka

Commissioned – March 23, 1942
End of Watch – August 18, 1951



The Washington State Patrol's eleventh fallen officer was Ivan Lye Belka who served over eight years with the agency before his untimely death when his patrol car was struck by another vehicle in Spokane in 1951.

Born in Oregon and raised in the Poulsbo area, Patrolman Belka had also served in the Port Angeles Police Department, the Pierce County Sherriff's Office and the National Auto Theft Bureau in Seattle. A husband and father, he died at the age of 38.

We remember....

BIO

Ivan L. Belka was born on April 8, 1913, in Coos Bay, Oregon to Herman A. Belka and Lilly May Abernathy. One of five children, he was raised in the Poulsbo area and attended North Kitsap High School.

In his early adulthood, Belka worked in the sawmill section of a pulp mill in Port Angeles. Later, he served with the Port Angeles Police Department and Pierce County Sheriff's Office. In 1933, he married Mary Enos in Port Townsend and the couple welcomed their son, Ronald, in 1936.

Belka began his career with the Washington State Patrol on December 20, 1941, as a radio operator in Port Angeles. He transferred to Vancouver in 1942, where he was commissioned as a patrolman on March 23, 1942 and was assigned to Kelso. Later that same year, he married his second wife Jean Elizabeth Bower, a nurse, in Spokane on June 5th.

In April of 1948, Patrolman Belka resigned from the Patrol to work with the National Auto Theft Bureau in Seattle. Patrolman Belka rejoined WSP in March of 1949, moving to Colville as an outpost patrolman.

END OF WATCH

Washington State Highway Patrolman Ivan L. Belka was tragically killed on a Saturday - August 18, 1951. He died from injuries when a vehicle failed to yield to Patrolman Belka's patrol vehicle. At the time of his death, Patrolman Belka had served 8-1/2 years with the Washington State Patrol. He was 38 years old.

Patrolman Belka had one son, Ronald, who was only 14 at the time of his father's death. At the time, Patrolman Belka lived in Colville. He was going into Spokane to get the radio in his patrol car fixed that day, and had planned to take Ronald with him. When Ronald awoke that morning, excited to ride into town, he found that his dad had already left. Ronald waited all day for his dad to return, only to sadly realize his father would never be coming home.

Ronald passed away on December 14, 2009. Ronald and his wife, Barbara, had four children (Ronda, Ron Belka, Jr., Avery and Aaron). Aaron Belka passed away at the age of 41 in 2015. Ronda, Ron Jr., and Avery live in California.

The Washington State Patrol remembers Ivan Belka with appreciation for his years of service in law enforcement and his dedication to family and duty. He left behind not only a son awaiting his father's return from an ill-fated journey, but also a state and agency saddened and lessened by the loss of a fine person and public servant. We remember...

Washington State Highway Patrolman Ivan Lye Belka

End of Watch – August 18, 1951
Gone But Never Forgotten

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